

**Lemon Grove Downtown Village Specific Plan Expansion (DVSPE)**

**Workshop #2 Summary**

**December 10, 2016**

**Introduction**

Workshop #2 for the DVSPE was held Saturday, December 10, 2016. Approximately 61 community stakeholders attended the workshop; only a few of the participants were return visitors from the first workshop held in August 2016. The Workshop #2 format included four stations related to the following topics:

- (1) Neighborhoods and Land Use
- (2) Mobility and Connections
- (3) Urban Design, Art, and Parks
- (4) Business and Economic Development

Respondents were asked to complete questionnaires while they participated at each station. Responses are summarized in greater detail in the sections that follow. The following table identifies the number of worksheets received:

**Table 1: Workshop #2 Response Summary**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Number of Worksheets Received</b>
Station 1: Neighborhoods and Land Use	48
Station 2: Mobility and Connections	49
Station 3: Urban Design, Art, and Parks	45
Station 4: Business and Economic Development	43
General Comments	47 + 8 E-mails
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>

**Executive Summary**

Generally, stakeholders are excited about change in the downtown, but want to retain a “small town” ambiance or “village” feel. Respondents were very supportive of concepts like a Broadway road diet and plaza space, an arts district and historic district, expanded pedestrian corridors, and creating opportunities for outdoor live performances. Respondents also concurred with the three major constraints to economic development within the Downtown Study Area identified by the consultant team, which include a lack of strong identity, relatively low median household income, and an overall lack of economic generators. Multiple respondents also identified increased trash, a lack of maintenance

or cleanliness, and homelessness as problems that should be addressed within the Downtown Study Area.

#### **Station #1: Neighborhoods and Land Use (48 worksheets)**

Respondents indicated general support for the inclusion of the following neighborhood/district identities in Downtown:

- Art District (83.33%);
- Historic District (85.00%);
- Enterprise and Employment District (64.29%);
- Broadway Mixed Use District (85.71%); and
- Civic District (92.86%).

A majority of respondents (75.76%) indicated an overall preference for the district configurations as shown on the Alternative 1 Land Use Map. In written comments, respondents indicated support for providing a broad mix of uses and expanding development opportunities to encourage change within the Downtown. Some respondents raised concerns about making the art district affordable and preferred to keep it smaller, but along Broadway. In addition, allowing building heights over 3 stories were also cited as a concern by some. Respondents indicated general support for the Enterprise and Employment District proposed in Alternative 2, but raised concern that the alternative as a whole did not incorporate enough residential uses. No respondents selected the No Change Alternative, which keeps planned land uses as is, as their desired scenario. Hotels and conference centers were also suggested by participants as desired land uses in the downtown.

#### **Station #2: Mobility and Connections (49 worksheets)**

Respondents were asked to rank street right-of-way improvements, on a scale of 1 (lowest priority) to 7 (highest priority). Average rankings are summarized as follows:

<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Average Ranking</b>
Pedestrian Paths	5.89
Trees and landscape	5.20
Lighting	4.84
Bicycle paths	4.68
Pocket parks	4.41
Vehicle speed of travel	3.21

Respondents generally ranked pedestrian paths as a high priority, followed by trees and landscape, lighting, bicycle paths, and pocket parks/park amenities. Respondents generally ranked vehicle speed of travel as their lowest priority. In written comments, respondents expressed concerns related to pedestrian safety and comfort while walking through Downtown, providing long-term maintenance for public infrastructure, and the possibility for public parks/park amenities to attract vagrancy and homelessness.

Regarding the linear park/traffic calming concepts proposed for Broadway east of Lemon Grove Ave, a majority of respondents (68.89%) indicated a preference for Alternative 2 – Boardwalk Plaza. Respondents preferred the connection of the plaza to adjacent businesses and opportunities for outdoor activities, live music and dining. Respondents also believed the plaza would accommodate more park space and better support a pedestrian environment. While supportive of the plaza concept along the north side of Broadway, respondents also voiced the need for improvements along the south side of Broadway.

Respondents supported proposed locations and concepts for truck/vehicle routes (55.88%), minor local routes (67.74%), and major local routes (54.84%). Respondents cited the need to coordinate truck delivery timing and routes.

A majority of respondents (70.59%) indicated support for proposed bicycle corridors. Most, however, did not support shared bicycle and vehicle lanes (sharrows) due to safety issues and preferred separated or dedicated bicycle paths (63.89%).

A majority of respondents (94.29%) indicated support for proposed pedestrian corridors. In addition, a majority of respondents supported proposed pedestrian corridors (71.43%) and bicycle corridors (66.67%), even if it meant that no vehicle parking would be allowed. Some respondents suggested relocating parking to areas behind businesses. Others who did not support the restriction on vehicle parking cited the importance of maintaining access to convenient parking.

Respondents marginally preferred roundabouts (47.73%) to signalized intersections (38.64%), but some were concerned about driver confusion and pedestrian safety.

Respondents had mixed feelings on allowing various modes of transportation within the downtown (e.g., skateboards, segways, and non-motorized scooters) with no definitive favorites or desire for specific modes.

### **Station #3: Urban Design, Art, and Parks (45 worksheets)**

Respondents selected Historic Modern (60.71%), Contemporary (42.86%), and Art Deco (39.29%) as their top three preferred architectural styles for the Art District. Respondents ranked Spanish Colonial/Mission Revival (66.67%), American Mercantile (46.67%), and Craftsman/Federation (26.67%) as their top three preferred architectural styles for the Historic District. In written responses and discussion at the workshop, some respondents also indicated a desire to keep the “eclectic” style of Lemon Grove and allow a combination of architectural styles; other respondents cited the need for a cohesive and uniform look.

Within the Art District, a majority of respondents cited a preference to see art used in street furniture (75.00%), murals and wall art (59.38%), façade or temporary storefront improvements (59.38%), and gateways and wayfinding signs (53.13%). In written responses, some respondents suggested that art celebrate the history and culture of Lemon Grove and, overall, be appropriate for a family-friendly environment. Concerns were raised regarding graffiti. Also within the Art District, a majority of

respondents identified a preference to see the following types of art-related uses: indoor and outdoor music and performance venues (75.00%), live-work units (71.43%), special events (67.86%), art studios (57.14%), and incubator/co-working/collective spaces (57.14%). Some respondents indicated that the development of an Art District should not preclude other uses.

Regarding the linear park concepts, the majority of respondents (73.53%) preferred Alternative 2 – Boardwalk Plaza, over Alternative 1 – Village Green (23.53%). With the Boardwalk Plaza Concept, respondents liked the pedestrian-friendly concept, including outdoor dining, a wider walking area in front of shops, and the versatility of public space that could be used for performances and festivals. Bike lanes and racks were also suggested. Respondents stated concerns regarding maintenance and voiced a need to incorporate drought-tolerant vegetation. Workshop attendees expressed a desire to see a hybrid of Alternatives 1 and 2 with additional green space incorporated into the design of the Boardwalk Plaza. General dislike for the palm trees shown in the concept exhibit was expressed along with suggestions for citrus trees or trees that produce a larger tree canopy.

A Broadway corridor business owner attended the workshop and she, along with other attendees, expressed concern that the improvements on the north side of Broadway under the Alternative 2 proposal favor the businesses on the north, which adds to the existing disparity between the conditions of the north and south sides of Broadway.

Workshop attendees in favor of Alternative 1 – Village Green, were pleased with the concert venue shown in the concept; however, pedestrian safety was a major concern with this alternative. Several attendees suggested safety fencing would be necessary between the expanded median and the vehicular lane. Mid-block crossings along the median were suggested as a way to allow pedestrians to safely cross the street and enable them to visit Broadway businesses with ease. Several attendees viewed the centered median as something that would draw visitors to the median and away from the businesses along Broadway.

A majority of respondents (75.76%) supported the concept of a pocket park requirement for new development; however, a small majority of respondents (52.94%) did not support additional dog parks in the Downtown study area. An overwhelming majority of respondents (94.29%) agreed with allowing live music events in public spaces.

#### **Station #4: Business and Economic Development (43 worksheets)**

A majority of respondents agreed with listed assets (89.74%) and constraints (86.49%). In general, respondents reiterated three main constraints – lack of strong identity, relatively low median household income, and lack of economic generators. Multiple respondents also identified increased trash, lack of maintenance or cleanliness, and homelessness as a problem within the Downtown Study Area. Existing vacant storefronts were also cited as a constraint to development.

A majority of respondents supported the strategies to revitalize the Downtown study area through the creation of Broadway mixed-use corridor (85.29%), Art District (85.29%), Employment District (88.24%), regional gathering place (81.82%), and Business Improvement District (80.00%). It should be noted for

context that a minority of respondents own property (31.58%) or own businesses (17.65%) within the Downtown Study Area. Those that identified as owning property and/or owning a business generally support all of the strategies to revitalize the Downtown study area; however, there was some opposition to the formation of a Business Improvement District due to concern regarding the costs that would be born to affected property-owners and/or businesses.

In written comments, respondents shared ideas for other implementation strategies and/or funding sources:

- Increase the utilization of Civic Center Park to foster the development of a regional gathering place
- Provide incentives for businesses; especially incentivize owners of south side of Broadway to clean-up
- Provide help to local residents that want to become business owners in Lemon Grove (e.g., expedite applications)
- Increase taxes on new business owners/corporations
- Decrease the cost of business licenses
- Create an Eco-Village concept to house the homeless
- Update building façades
- Plan for a hotel-conference center
- Offer other local tax incentives
- Some art could be used in financial gains

In addition, a respondent expressed concern regarding the gentrification and displacement that may result from economic development and stressed a need to balance the two competing interests.

#### **General Comments (47 worksheets and 8 E-mails)**

Most of the General Comments that were provided reiterated statements made at each station. A concern was raised, however, regarding the impacts Measure V, the medical marijuana initiative, may have on the plan. A specific request was also submitted to allow live entertainment within restaurants via a minor use permit. Other ideas were raised that include:

- Expand the facilities at the skate park;
- Include a community garden in the Civic Center or Historic District;
- Plan for a “wellness hub” that incorporates wellness, health, and social services;
- Create an overhead walkway to help pedestrians cross the Broadway and Lemon Grove Avenue intersection;
- Encourage a hotel-conference center within walking distance of the promenade (i.e., in the proposed historic district area);
- Host an annual lemon festival; and
- Include a fountain in the town square.

**Attachments:**

- Attachment 1: Station 1 – Land Use Summary Data
- Attachment 2: Station 2 – Mobility Summary Data
- Attachment 3: Station 3 – Urban Design, Art, and Parks Summary Data
- Attachment 4: Station 4 – Business and Economic Development Summary Data
- Attachment 5: General Comments Summary Data
- Attachment 6: Land Use Maps
  - 6A: Alternative 1
  - 6B: Alternative 2
  - 6C: No Change Alternative
- Attachment 7: Existing Roadway Classifications
- Attachment 8: Pedestrian and Bike Circulation Map
- Attachment 9: Vehicular Circulation Map
- Attachment 10: Art District Exhibit
- Attachment 11: Historic District Exhibit
- Attachment 12: Broadway Road Diet Concepts
  - 12A: Alternative 1 – Village Green
  - 12B: Alternative 2 – Boardwalk Plaza
- Attachment 13: Economic Development Exhibit